

38794

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS PLAN
Pulverizing Services Site
Moorestown, New Jersey



AUGUST 1998

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INTRODUCTION

Public participation is a key element in the Superfund process. The public needs to be informed of site activities, study findings, and remediation alternatives and decisions. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) needs to hear public opinion and to address the questions and concerns of all interested parties. The need to maintain this avenue of communication and to actively encourage public participation has inspired the community relations programs which parallel and complement the technical work at each Superfund site. Integral to those programs is the Community Relations Plan (CRP) itself.

The Community Relations Plan is the foundation for community relations efforts at a Superfund site, serving as a blueprint for activities designed to enhance public participation at the site.

The Community Relations Plan is divided into the following chapters:

- ◆ Chapter 1: Site Background
- ◆ Chapter 2: Public Participation Profile
- ◆ Chapter 3: Suggested Community Relations Activities
- ◆ Chapter 4: Mailing List

1) SITE BACKGROUND

The Pulverizing Services Site comprises approximately 24 acres located at 331 New Albany Road in Moorestown, Burlington County, New Jersey. The site is 3/4-mile east of the North Branch Pennsauken Creek and is bordered on the north by Crider Avenue, on the south by railroad tracks of the Camden and Burlington County Main Line, to the east by some active industrial facilities, and to the west by an active industrial, commercial and residential area.

The Pulverizing Services site is an inactive pesticide formulating facility operated and owned by a number of different parties over the years 1935-1979, including Micronizer Company, PPG Industries, Inc., and Pulverizing Services. The facility has been inactive and unoccupied since 1979, when Pulverizing Services closed. Over the years, active pesticide ingredients such as DDT, aldrin, malathion and dieldrin were brought to the site, ground, blended with clay or other inactive ingredients, and packaged for distribution under various labels. At no time were active pesticide ingredients manufactured at the site.

During the 1950's and early 1960's, waste material was disposed of behind the main production buildings in several trenches. In the fall of 1987, the U.S. Environmental protection Agency (EPA) became involved at the site by collecting a number of soils samples and conducting an investigation to determine the extent of the disposal trenches at the site. In May 1988, PPG placed a security fence around areas of the site northwest of New Albany Road. Over the winter of 1989-90, the first phase of investigation was done at the site by PPG, with EPA direction and oversight. The results of that investigation showed that some subsurface and surface soils contained levels of DDT, aldrin and dieldrin at levels exceeding EPA's risk-based concentrations. It also showed that groundwater at the site was impacted by pesticides such as sevin, DDT and dieldrin, while sediment samples indicated the presence of DDD and malathion.

Between 1990 and 1993, chemicals were removed from site buildings and the remainder of the property was fenced in. A second phase of investigation was conducted from November 1994 to March 1995 to further define the nature and extent of contamination. In June 1996, PPG and their contractors (with EPA oversight) removed contaminated soils from the from the Securicor Telesciences property. In November of 1996, contaminated soils were removed from the Winstead Apartment properties adjacent to the south side of the Site. These off-site soils have been secured in one of the buildings at the Pulverizing facility, for later remediation with site soils.

At the present time PPG is preparing a study that will evaluate appropriate clean up scenarios for the site. EPA will then propose what is deemed to be the most appropriate remedy, present it for public comment and then select a remedy based on the studies performed and public comment.

2) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROFILE

In the Fall of 1996, EPA Community Relations staff contacted some Moorestown residents in order to ascertain the level of community concern in relation to the Pulverizing Services site. An effort was made to interview individuals who have long been associated with a number of local organizations including STEM (Save the Environment of Moorestown), the Moorestown Improvement Association, the Moorestown Garden Club, the Strawbridge Lake Restoration Association and the Environmental Advisory Committee of Moorestown Township. Overall, environmental issues pertinent to the Pulverizing Services were not expressed as a significant concern, but instead focused on issues of development and transportation, historic preservation and the preservation of open spaces and wetlands.

STEM was founded in 1973 and has its foundation in the League of Women Voters. This group has been highly involved in open space issues and the restoration of Strawbridge Lake. Historic preservation is another local environmental issue, and the League of Women Voters is very active in lobbying for the designation of Historic District Zoning in Moorestown.

With regard to environmental issues connected to the Pulverizing Services site, some residents interviewed expressed concern about possible contamination of the stream that is located near the railroad tracks between Devon Road and New Albany Road, reporting that in the 1970's, the stream took on a bright yellow color. There was discussion which suggested that some testing of stream sediments would be welcomed by the community. Some interviewees recalled that it was around this same time that a member of the Moorestown Planning Board mentioned possible contamination at the Pulverizing Services site. There has been little discussion or activity surrounding this issue in the ensuing years.

There is a condominium complex (Winstead Village) adjacent to a portion of the site. Both EPA and PPG Industries have kept the residents informed of site activities and upcoming work. No concerns about the site have been voiced by these residents.

Overall, no sense of animosity was expressed toward industries in the area, including Pulverizing Services, Inc., however, it was suggested that perhaps at a future date when the site is cleaned up, the owner of the property might want to consider working with the community on open space projects.

3) SUGGESTED COMMUNITY RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

Although all activities discussed in this chapter contribute to the achievement of the objectives of meaningful public participation, certain activities are specifically suggested under the guidelines set forth in "Community Relations in Superfund: A Handbook," published by the USEPA Office of Emergency and Remedial Response.

In order to keep the community informed and to promote meaningful public participation in the Superfund process, the following activities are suggested:

COMPILE PROJECT MAILING LIST

Compile and maintain a mailing list of all stakeholders for distribution of information about the site, upcoming site activities, and meetings. The list should be current and include neighboring property owners, local businesses, elected officials, local civic and citizen organizations, schools, churches, church groups, day care centers and health care providers, and local media. Lists should be updated annually and after local elections.

ESTABLISH INFORMATION REPOSITORY

An information repository should be established for the site at a location where all site documents may be easily accessed and reviewed by the public. The location should be as close to the affected community as possible, have been evening and weekend hours, copying capabilities and be accessible to the disabled. The repository should include the administrative record for the site and be regularly updated as documents are made available. An announcement of the availability of the repository should be made to the public via a direct mailing and press release.

CONDUCT PUBLIC MEETINGS AND/OR PUBLIC AVAILABILITY SESSIONS

Public meetings and informal informational sessions known as Public Availability Sessions should be conducted at project milestones and when technical information needs to be conveyed to the public. A public meeting and a public comment period are mandated by law when EPA comes out to the public with its Proposed Plan for site clean up. The public meeting should be held at a site convenient to the community during the evening hours. It may be advisable to follow the public meeting with a public availability session in order to further clarify technical issues and address community concerns in a more personal manner. All announcements of meetings and availability sessions will be done through direct mailings, accompanied by a press release and follow-up phone calls to elected officials.

HOLD PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

A minimum thirty-day public comment period is required in the Superfund process at the time the Proposed Plan is presented to the public, which is at the end of the RI/FS in a typical project.

PREPARE A RESPONSIVENESS SUMMARY

The Responsiveness Summary documents all comments received during the public comment period and is included in the Decision Document (DD). This document should be placed in the Information Repository for public review.

PROVIDE PRESS RELEASES TO LOCAL MEDIA

Press releases and press advisories are sent out to local media to announce site milestones or to announce important new data. If public and press interest is extraordinarily high or a particularly controversial issue is being addressed, it may be advisable to conduct a press conference as well. Local press includes the Burlington County Times, The Camden Courier and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

BRIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS

Briefings on site activities and public concerns should be conducted for elected officials at project milestones. Briefings should be offered on local, state and federal levels.

PREPARE SITE UPDATES

Fact sheets and site updates should be produced for use in meetings and for distribution to the mailing list. In addition, updates may be distributed through local schools, churches and elected officials.

PRESENTATIONS

Presentations utilizing site maps, fact sheets, slides, overheads, etc., can be given at both formal and informal meetings with citizens, press, and local officials.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT

The EPA may grant \$50,000 to any community or grassroots organization which is impacted or potentially impacted by a Superfund site. These monies are used by the group to retain their own technical advisor to review and interpret EPA documents pertinent to the site. The monies may not be used for any legal services, and towns, villages and municipalities may not be grant recipients. EPA has numerous TAGs in place at Superfund sites throughout the state of New Jersey.

EPA CONTACTS:

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- 4) **MAILING LIST** - See attached